

The removal of Morse code as a requirement for Amateur Radio operating privileges below 30 MHz will have two profound consequences. First it will reduce the number of persons that will experiment with low power communications. In an era when energy prices are rising we need to encourage people who wish to explore low power communications. New RF circuits or techniques that can be pioneered by low cost stations operating Morse Code can eventually grow into designs that benefit other modes of communications such as text, image or voice. Second, many amateur operators are experimenting with using the best propagation conditions possible. The techniques used in searching for stations using Morse code often make the operator observe small narrow bandwidth segments of the radio spectrum to detect weak signals. New propagation paths and effects can be discovered in this way with relatively low cost equipment.

An interesting analogy can be drawn with the US Navy's training of Midshipman. Learning to sail small sailboats and race Yawls is encouraged at the US Naval Academy. One PBS TV Special from the mid 90s pointed out that the navy believed that in learning to handle these small craft that are highly influenced by their environment future officers would gain invaluable experience that could be put to use judging the seas where there frigates, destroyers, and carriers operate. Is it so unreasonable then that communications experts who learn a "bare-bones" means of communications will gain insight into the peculiarities of communications such as propagation and receiver noise that otherwise would go unnoticed?